

Broadview Mayor Pushes For State Transportation Bill

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Featured image: Broadview Mayor Katrina Thompson, right, with Ford Heights Mayor Annie Coulter, left, and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. | Courtesy Mayor Katrina Thompson

During a Dec. 11 press conference, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel joined members of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus to express support for state legislation that would pay for additional infrastructure repairs through an increase in the state's motor fuel tax.

According to a [statement](#) released Tuesday by Emanuel's office, the motor fuel tax "has been flat for gasoline since 1990" and Illinois "has not passed a statewide capital bill since 2009.

Broadview Mayor Katrina Thompson, who joined Emanuel at the press conference, said that she fully supports a statewide bill that increases dollars available for infrastructure improvements.

"Other states have done this," she said in an interview on Tuesday evening. "I think it's time we get on board."

Thompson, however, was less enthusiastic about funding it through a motor fuel tax increase. She said she would need more information about that particular component.

According to other media reports, Hillside Mayor Joseph T. Tamburino also supports the statewide infrastructure funding bill. When contacted Tuesday night, Maywood Mayor Edwenna Perkins and said Bellwood Mayor Andre Harvey said that they needed to do more research into the proposed bill.

Melrose Park Mayor Ron Serpico could not be immediately reached on Tuesday night for comment.

"For Illinois to maintain its status as the transportation hub of the nation, we need to make major infrastructure investments to support our transportation systems," Emanuel said during the Dec. 11 press conference.

"In addition to critical funding to replace aging roads and bridges, sustained, flexible revenues need to flow directly to public transit," he said. "As the backbone of our larger transportation network and a stimulator of economic development, transit needs a dedicated, reliable revenue source so that we can continue to modernize and grow the system."

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning said that it would take an estimated \$56 million to maintain, improve and expand the region's transportation system.

"Decades of underinvestment have created a significant backlog of projects to reach a state of good repair," Emanuel's statement points out.

Emanuel's proposal calls for a 20 to 30 cent per gallon increase in the motor fuel tax to help pay for future infrastructure needs.

The mayor added that federal and state revenues haven't kept up with inflation, and that "recent signals from Washington point to growing reliance on state and local revenues to fund these needs."

According to Emanuel's statement, roughly half of the country's states, "including Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, Iowa and Ohio have raised transportation revenues since 2012, while Illinois's gas tax has been at 19 cents per gallon since 1990.

"Every five cent per gallon increase in the motor fuel tax results in approximately \$20 million more in City revenue and over \$250 million statewide." **VFP**

Clarification: This article has been updated to more clearly outline Broadview Mayor Katrina Thompson's position.

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